

Good afternoon, Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Amanda Boulay and I come before you to express my strong opposition to the proposed budget cuts for Community Colleges. In September 2008, I started at Naugatuck Valley Community College. I originally came to NVCC because I wanted to expand my horizons. At first, I was unsure of what I wanted to study. I knew only that I loved to talk and meet new people. When I took my college placement test, I went around, talked to different people and learned of all the many programs offered at Naugatuck Valley Community College. Eventually, I discovered the hospitality department when taking a tour of the new state of the art technology building. The second I saw the building, I knew where I belonged. During my two and a half years at Naugatuck Valley, I have grown and learned many life lessons that will stay with me the rest of my life. My professors are amazing. They explain the material, give real life examples, and help us to get real world experience in and outside the classroom.

Being a daughter of a single mother, the problem of how to pay my tuition is always an issue. Working two to three jobs, my mother continues to struggle to pay and there never seems to be enough money. I also work to pay tuition. If tuition were to increase, I could not afford to attend Naugatuck Valley Community College. Even if I somehow paid my tuition, there are still the raising costs of books to consider. If tuition increases and more students need financial aid, how can the college continue to support students? Any proposed budget reduction will impact the cost of attending NVCC, courses that are available and services in support of students. I respectfully request the legislature not approve a reduced budget for the community colleges. Students just like me depend on these institutions to help us succeed and provide us with an affordable and quality education. I thank you for the opportunity to testify and listen to my story which represents thousands of others. Thank you.

Amanda Boulay

Naugatuck Valley Community College Student